2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
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body where it will not be visible. If it is not effectual, there is always open to them the signal afforded by kindly national custom to maidens longing for a mate. They cut off the lappets of hair, the bya-bazan, hanging over the ears, and the significance is the same as the white heather of the language of flowers, "heart for sale." In Rangoon the tattooing of a woman has a special signification, not recognised elsewhere. It means that she wants an Englishman for a husband. Poor thing!

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Another very universal kind of tattooing is that with a-hpi se. Almost every schoolboy in the country has a specimen of this on him, for does it not prevent him from feeling the pain when he is caned? No amount of falsified hopes in the experience of friends will persuade him that it may not be effectual in his case, and a flogging is often courted as an immediate test of its efficacy. Pride repels the inquiries of chums as to the results, but the experimenter is usually very well behaved for some time. In the case of older men the a-hpi se acts as a talisman against bullets, sword cuts, and ills of that kind. Allied to this are the thenat hpi, which soldiers and dacoits carry about with them. These are the horns of buffaloes and other animals, which may be plain, but are usually elaborately carved with figures according to fancy. They must be quite solid down to the root. A hollow or flaw of any kind deprives them of their virtue. While the man has such a talisman in his hands he cannot be killed. A monkey is a very favourite image to have carved in this way on a sword or dagger hilt, the reference being to the tale of the Ramayana. Of a similar nature are talismans which are especially used by soldiers and dacoits. These hkaung-beit-set are charmed or consecrated objects let into the flesh under the skin. They are of various kinds. Some are gold, silver, or lead; others curious pebbles, pieces of tortoise-shell, or bits of horn, all of them with incantations of mystic character written on them. Many famed dacoits have long rows and curves of them over the chest, showing in little knobs through the skin. When they get into English prisons, an energetic jailer has been known to cut them out, lest they should be pieces of gold or silver, or perhaps precious stones, with which the turnkeys

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might be bribed. The usual result is to break the robber's spirit. Once the continuity is interrupted the consecration is gone. More peaceable people wear necklaces or bracelets of such talismans in the belief that they are thus proof against malignant witches and necromancers. Most Englishmen in Burma, who are on friendly terms with the people, have been asked to test the virtue of such a charm, by firing at it tied up in a handkerchief. If the incantation is valid the handkerchief will be unharmed, though the muzzle of the pistol be held up to it. In such a case the pistol will burst.

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Another kind of tattooing is the mwe se, which guards against danger from snake bite. Similarly the a-kwè a-ka, the shielding, or defending drug, renders harmless the spells of wizards and geomancers, and keeps far away evil spirits of every kind. But the most hideous and weird of the superstitions about tattooing is that connected with the a-kyan se. There are but very few sayās who are acquainted with the necessary drugs and incantations, and fewer people still who have the courage to submit to the operation, for many men are pointed out whose minds have given way under the gruesome process, and who wander about graveyards, gnashing their teeth and fumbling about for human bones to gnaw and mouth. And no wonder, for some tattooers make them chew the raw flesh of a man who has been hanged, while the figure is being tattooed on the breast. Those who go through the operation are called Baw-di-tha-da. Some become Baw-di-tha-da without knowing it, and without the sickening necessity of mumbling human flesh like a ghoul. I knew an instance in a monastery. The patient was a boarder about fourteen years of age. A Shan tattooer wandering about the country spent a couple of nights in the kyaung, and the boy, attracted by the fellow's eerie tales, managed to save up a good many titbits for him from the food going in the monastery. Out of gratitude, and having nothing better to give him, for he was very poor and homeless, the sayā tattooed on the lad a figure with singular drugs, muttering queer phrases the while. Then he went away saying no more than that it would make the boy very strong. In about a month's time the boarder displayed unmistakable signs of being a Baw-di-tha-da. He

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carved with flowers and figures, and adorned with the usual flamboyant pinnacles, supported on massive teak pillars, painted vermilion colour at the base, and gilt higher up. Straight ahead is the great Hall of Audience, a colonnade, or columned arcade, extending along the entire eastern front, and opening directly upon it. At the end of a pillared vista stands the throne, on a dais, reached by five steps from the level of the hall. The top is a cushioned ledge, like the box in a theatre. Just over the throne, and in the centre of the palace, which is the centre of the city, which is the centre of Burma, which is the Turanian "hub" of the world, rises the seven-roofed spire, emblematic of royalty and religion. The princes of the highest rank sit in front to the right of the throne; those of the blood-royal, but not so closely connected, to the left. Then in regular gradation, opposite one another, the wungyi, atwinwuns, wundauks, and the minor officials. On either side of the hall of audience and behind are a number of minor throne-rooms, not rooms in the English sense of the word, but simply open roofed spaces, separated from each other by skirtings of planking, covered with gold-leaf, and supported by a multitude of teak pillars, dyed for the greater part of their height a deep red. Some rooms are almost entirely gilt, others are adorned with wall-paintings, others, again, with the favourite mosaic of bits of mirror and coloured glass, framed in a gilt network. Every room is furnished with one or more stands of arms; there is a rack of sadly ill-cared-for muskets round the throne itself. The palace is, in fact, a gigantic armoury. All the cannon and guns in the country are kept there. Hence it is that when the palace is taken by a usurper, the country is conquered. The abundance of gold-leaf ought to make the effect splendid, but the quantity of alloy there is in the gilding makes it speedily lose its glitter, and the general impression is that of dinginess, if not indeed of actual slip-shod tawdriness. But to be seen at its best the palace should be visited on a great beg-pardon day, when the rough plank floors are covered with gorgeous rugs and carpets, and the halls are filled with officials dressed in all the hues of the rainbow.

There are a variety of matters to be carefully observed by all who enter, or have anything to do with the palace.

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Monastery. As chiefs of the Letthôndaw, the Royal Page Bodyguard, they had the opportunity which won their rank. A daughter of the Taingda married the Hpaungwun, and the Atwinwun in consequence gave occasional dinners to the European and quasi-European dwellers in Mandalay. The guests were, as a rule, not in a position to brave his anger by a refusal, and had to endure most elaborate indignities at his hands. All the most humiliating formalities of the palace had to be observed towards the young minister, and the *menu* was said, by the victims, to be the worst of them all. In regard to this, it must be remembered that it took a very great deal to hurt the dignity of some Mandalay Europeans, and also that they were as fickle as any mob.

These three atwinwuns were the most powerful ministers, and had greater influence with the king than any of their technical superiors. The four wungyis were, with the exception of the Upathi, of very little account with any one. The Laungshwe Mingyi had been for long nearly bed-ridden, and was not able to appear even at Mindôn's funeral. The other three had all been in Europe, but the most that can be said of the Kampat Mingyi is that he became the king's father-in-law, while the Yaw was absent for nearly two years on an expedition against the Shan mountaineers. He effected nothing warlike, and rumour said that he was so fully occupied in keeping the troops from dispersing to their homes that he had no time to fight. The fourth, however, was a remarkable man. The Upathi, better known as the Kinwunmingyi, had been very prominent for years, and he lived for twenty years after the annexation as a pensioner of the British Government. He used to be commonly spoken of as the premier on English analogy, but there was really no such dignitary known in Burma, and the Kinwungyi's substantive appointment was simply that of foreign secretary. He was twice to Europe on embassies, and his naturally acute mind was thus enlarged in its views. Had it not been for his great command over the public feeling, and his influence even over King Thibaw, there would certainly have been war between Burma and Great Britain in 1879. The foreign secretary was the representative of order and it was a bad thing for the

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CHAPTER LIV

THE BURMESE ARMY

THE Burmese army was not thought very much of even by the most patriotic Burman who had seen soldiers in other parts of the world. Malignant people called it a rabble; more smooth-tongued and favourably-disposed critics were fain to acknowledge that it was deficient in discipline. In physique and courage the men were formidable enough, but flintlocks and long Enfields do not avail much against the breechloader, and when complete inability to manœuvre was added to this, it was evident that even in jungle warfare, except against an equally ill-armed foe, King Thibaw's forces would make but a sorry show. Military instruction of a certain kind they had, but it never extended beyond squad drill, and even this was but very perfunctorily learned, while movements of large bodies of men were never attempted, except the so-called reviews, which took place every now and again, and in 1879 were held within a day or two either way at the full moon of every month. These "reviews" were, however, nothing more than marches-out on a big scale, and were only useful as a means of displaying the soldier in the glory of his uniform, and giving him a little exercise. Except on these occasions, indeed, it was seldom that the soldiery appeared in military dress. Even when on guard they dispensed with every article of warlike attire, except the gun, and even that was more frequently to be found in the rack than in the sentry's hands. These military promenades, therefore, offered the most favourable opportunity of observing the royal levies.

The troops mustered at an early hour in the wide glacis

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
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between the inner and outer stockades of the palace. There they fell in, in a theoretical formation of fours, and remained placidly waiting; conversation went on freely, and smoking and chewing betel were not interfered with. The bogyi and other officers of rank meanwhile assembled within the inner court. After, perhaps, three or four hours' waiting, the king came out and inspected the forces through a field-glass from the head of the broad flight of steps in front of the Hall of Audience, or, perhaps, a notice was sent out that his majesty would not even view his troops in this easy fashion, and the army was saved from the—to English notions—exceedingly unmilitary attitude of grovelling on its stomach for a matter of two minutes while the king looked through his binocular.

This over, the non-commissioned officers said *hé!* and the men sloped arms and started off anyhow. Outside the eastern gate a halt was made while the bogyis, colonels of regiments, mounted their elephants, got into position, and marshalled their bodyguards round about them. The lesser bos and thwethaukgyis, "great blood drinkers," were mounted on ponies and had their personal retainers about them too. The commanding officer came at the head of his regiment, preceded by twenty pages carrying double-barrelled smooth-bores in red cloth covers. These pages were all dressed alike, according to the individual taste of the commander, in uniform turbans, tunic, and pason. The livery of the young Kachin colonel of the Fourth Regiment was the most effective—red-flowered turbans, French grey jackets, and red pasos of the wavy "dog's tooth" pattern. The colonel of the Third Regiment, on the other hand, revelled in bilious contrasts—pea-green gaungbaungs, flowing red tunics, and yellow waistcloths of what a 'Varsity tradesman would call a neat quiet plaid pattern. This bodyguard walked at either side of the road in loose Indian file to see that the way was clear. The bo himself rode an elephant, gorgeously caparisoned, with tassels and streamers trailing to the ground from the velvet-covered howdah. He was dressed in the national turban and paso, but wore a tight-fitting tunic, covered with gold lace. All of them were either smoking or chewing betel. Behind the elephant came

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the umbrella-bearer, or, perhaps, two or three of them if the officer had attained such distinction. 701 714

The actual civilian commander of the regiment seldom came out to the review, so that there were comparatively few gold umbrellas, but the red and green military sun-shades, with deep fringes, added perhaps more to the brilliance of the array, considered simply as a spectacle. Behind the hti-bearers came the minor officers, mounted on ponies, with the ordinary Burmese scarlet cloth saddle and tassels sweeping [492] over the animal's flanks. Each of these minor chiefs also had his umbrella borne over his head, and a score or two of spear-men guarded the flanks of the cavalcade. Mingled up among them was a confused crowd of cheroot-bearers, spittoon-holders, betel-box carriers, and similar functionaries such as accompany a Burmese grandee wherever he goes. Behind this motley assemblage came the regimental colours. These were bifurcated red pennants, burgees bearing the number of the battalion, and leogryphs, lions, dogs, dragons, and similar distinguishing emblems for the different regiments. The standard was not very ponderous, but occasionally the bearer—he was not an officer—got tired of carrying it over his shoulder and lowered it to the trail without seeming to injure any one's sense of congruity. He was followed by 704 the band, or a portion of it, for the musicians were scattered 533 in twos and threes all over the regiment, usually at the head of a company, but not by any means necessarily so. Burmese music is ordinarily far from soft and gentle. At a play the trumpets blare, and the gongs, cymbals, and clappers clash and jingle and rattle in truly inspiriting fashion. But no such spirit-stirring strains are considered necessary to rouse martial ardour. A military bandsman required no preliminary education. All he had to do was to tap, tap away in the most stolid and monotonous fashion on a kyinaung. This is a brass or bell-metal gong, about the size of a dessert plate with a small round boss in the centre. The sound is sweet, and they are pitched in different keys, but a low-country Burman is at a loss to divine their precise use. The sound does not travel far, and they are not beaten in any fixed time, besides that the ahmudan would not step to it if they were; so that if it were not for the dignity

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 APl Burma
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forts Captain Barker of H.M.'s 89th P.V., the best English authority on Upper Burma military matters, said, "without ditch, without flank defence, without expense magazines, without traverses to protect the gunners, they are mere shell-traps for the destruction of the garrison." He might have added that they were without armament, and in 1885 they surrendered without firing a shot. Mandalay itself has naturally a strong position because of its inaccessibility. To the east it is guarded by the Shan mountains and the marshy plains below. Rivers and creeks make the approach from the south difficult. On the north is an impassable morass. On the west of the city are wide-spreading, thickly populated suburbs, and the river-side is defended by a high embankment. But the weakness of Mandalay lay in the worthlessness of the army and the feebleness of its armament. The kingdom of Burma was, in fact, nothing like so powerful as it was a quarter of a century before, when the second Burmese war was ended. When the end came Mandalay fell to a force twenty miles away.

Note.—It has been brought to the writer's notice that several worthy Frenchmen have been hurt by the references to foreigners in this and in preceding and following chapters. It may therefore be noted here that the count who sold syrups was not the Comte de Trevelec, who was a contemporary of the Marquis de Gallifet at St. Cyr, and that there is no reference to General de Facieu, a popular, picturesque, and notable French gentleman. Neither were Louis Vossion nor Monsieur Fernand d'Avéra thought of when this book was written. Vossion was a stubborn patriot. Monsieur d'Avéra is a genial patriot with a doubt whether France or Upper Burma has the greater claims on him. In any case for fifty years Fernand d'Avéra has been one of the best known and best liked men in Burma.

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

the law, the unchangeable law that man is subject to. There is no good thing but peace, no sin like strife and war.' That is what the followers of the great teacher would tell the peasant yearning for help to strike a blow upon the invaders. The law is the same for all. There is not one law for you and another for the foreigner; there is not one law to-day and another to-morrow. Truth is for ever and for ever. It cannot change even to help you in your extremity. Think of the English soldier and the Burmese peasant. Can there be anywhere a greater contrast than this?

Truly this is not a creed for a soldier, not a creed for a fighting-man of any kind, for what the soldier wants is a personal god who will always be on his side, always share his opinions, always support him against everyone else. But a law that points out unalterably that right is always right, and wrong always wrong, that nothing can alter one into the other, nothing can ever make killing righteous and violence honourable, that is no creed for a soldier. And Buddhism has ever done this. It never bent to popular opinion, never made itself a tool in the hands of worldly passion. It could not. You might as well say to gravity, 'I want to lift this stone; please don't act on it for a time,' as expect Buddhism to assist you to make war. Buddhism is the unalterable law of righteousness, and cannot ally itself with evil, cannot ever be persuaded that under any circumstances evil can be good.

And so the Burmese peasant had to fight his own fight in 1885 alone. His king was gone, his government broken up, he had no leaders. He had

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
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no god to stand beside him when he fired at the foreign invaders; and when he lay a-dying, with a bullet in his throat, he had no one to open to him the gates of heaven.

And yet he fought—with every possible discouragement he fought, and sometimes he fought well. It has been thrown against him as a reproach that he did not do better. Those who have said this have never thought, never counted up the odds against him, never taken into consideration how often he did well.

Here was a people—a very poor people of peasants—with no leaders, absolutely none; no aristocracy of any kind, no cohesion, no fighting religion. They had for their leaders outlaws and desperadoes, and for arms old flint-lock guns and soft iron swords. Could anything be expected from this except what actually did happen? And yet they often did well, their natural courage overcoming their bad weapons, their passionate desire of freedom giving them the necessary impulse.

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In 1886, as I have said, all Burma was up. Even in the lower country, which we held for so long, insurrection was spreading fast, and troops and military police were being poured in from India.

There is above Mandalay a large trading village—a small town almost—called Shemmaga. It is the river port for a large trade in salt from the inner country, and it was important to hold it. The village lay along the river bank, and about the middle of it, some two hundred yards from the river, rises a small hill. Thus the village was a triangle,

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
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with the base on the river, and the hill as apex. On the hill were some monasteries of teak, from which the monks had been ejected, and three hundred Ghurkas were in garrison there. A strong fence ran from the hill to the river like two arms, and there were three gates, one just by the hill, and one on each end of the river face.

Behind Shemmaga the country was under the rule of a robber chief called Maung Yaing, who could raise from among the peasants some two hundred or three hundred men, armed mostly with flint-locks. He had been in the king's time a brigand with a small number of followers, who defied or eluded the local authorities, and lived free in quarters among the most distant villages. Like many a robber chief in our country and elsewhere, he was liked rather than hated by the people, for his brutalities were confined to either strangers or personal enemies, and he was open-handed and generous. We look upon things now with different eyes to what we did two or three hundred years ago, but I dare say Maung Yaing was neither better nor worse than many a hero of ours long ago. He was a fairly good fighter, and had a little experience fighting the king's troops; and so it was very natural, when the machinery of government fell like a house of cards, and some leaders were wanted, that the young men should crowd to him, and put themselves under his orders. He had usually with him forty or fifty men, but he could, as I have said, raise five or six times as many for any particular service, and keep them together for a few days. He very soon discovered that he and his men were absolutely no match for our troops.

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
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and the enemy were gone, no one could tell whither, into the night.

Such a scene of desolation as that village was next day! It was all destroyed—every house. All the food was gone, all furniture, all clothes, everything, and here and there was a corpse in among the blackened cinders. The whole countryside was terror-stricken at this failure to defend those who had depended on us.

I do not think this was a particularly gallant act, but it was a very able one. It was certainly war. It taught us a very severe lesson—more severe than a personal reverse would have been. It struck terror in the countryside. The memory of it hampered us for very long; even now they often talk of it. It was a brutal act—that of a brigand, not a soldier.

But there was no want of courage. If these men, inferior in number, in arms, in everything, could do this under the lead of a robber chief, what would they not have done if well led, if well trained, if well armed?

Of desperate encounters between our troops and the insurgents I could tell many a story. I have myself seen such fights. They nearly always ended in our favour—how could it be otherwise?

There was Ta Te, who occupied a pagoda enclosure with some eighty men, and was attacked by our mounted infantry. There was a long fight in that hot afternoon, and very soon the insurgents' ammunition began to fail, and the pagoda was stormed. Many men were killed, and Ta Te, when his men were nearly all dead, and his ammunition quite expended, climbed up the pagoda wall, and twisted off

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
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721 pieces of the cement and threw them at the troops. He would not surrender—not he—and he was killed. There were many like him. The whole war was little affairs of this kind—a hundred, three hundred, of our men, and much the same, or a little more, of theirs. They only once or twice raised a force of two thousand men. Nothing can speak more forcibly of their want of organization than this. The whole country was pervaded by bands of fifty or a hundred men, very rarely amounting to more than two hundred, and no two bands ever acted in concert.

It is probable that most of the best men of the country were against us. It is certain, I think, that of those who openly joined us and accompanied us in our expedition, very, very few were other than men who had some private grudge to avenge, or some purpose to gain, by opposing their own people. Of such as these you cannot expect very much. And yet there were exceptions—men who showed up all the more brilliantly because they were exceptions—men whom I shall always honour. There were two I remember best of all. They are both dead now.

722 One was the eldest son of the hereditary governor of a part of the country called Kawlin. It is in the north-west of Upper Burma, and bordered on a semi-independent state called Wuntho. In the troubles that occurred after the deposition of King Thibaw, the Prince of Wuntho thought that he would be able to make for himself an independent kingdom, and he began by annexing Kawlin. So the governor had to flee, and with him his sons, and

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
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572. VILLAGE ELDERS IN CONCLAVE.

disperse as quickly as it was recruited or else it might develop into a band under a regular leader (*Bô*) and become the scourge of the country, rapidly attacking points separated by days' journeys. Against such bands the villagers combine and keep guard; torches are ready for night alarms. But when the brigands are too strong, the villagers have no choice but to enter into league with them and pay blackmail if they would not experience the horrors of barbarous war. At present brigandage is of very sporadic occurrence. Travellers are perfectly safe.

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Throughout Burma every man was liable to serve in war. He would have his own sabre and pike and would be provided with musket and ammunition, but no further accoutrements. Latterly the king's body-guards wore a sort of uniform (No. 9). Cannon are mentioned as early as 1350, and a century later, matchlocks were in use. Cæsar Frederick in 1569 speaks of pikes and arquebuses and good cannon. When disbanded, the soldiers had to surrender their muskets, but numbers were smuggled away, to add to the rigour of the guerilla waged by brigands and the severity of the villagers' retaliation.

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573. BURMAN OFFICIAL RECEIVING APPLICANTS.

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The military leader is called *Bô;* the civil governor or minister of the king, *Wun*, which means a burden or trust. The former might be a young man, the latter but rarely so. Age and influence are almost synonymous in Burma. If the elders—headmen, *lûdyî*—are agreed upon a thing, it is done. The village elders represent the fundamental substratum of government in Burma. They are consulted by the officials on matters affecting the people, whose natural, if unofficial,

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
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562. ROYAL INSIGNIA.

supervision, are combined into a district under a European magistrate, the Deputy Commissioner, who has a European officer for district superintendent of police, commanding an average force of four hundred native constables. At the district headquarters are a police-depôt, treasury, jail and hospital, besides courthouses and offices. The district officer hears appeals from the *myooks*, and tries all offences except the gravest and heavy civil suits. This organisation is the backbone of the civil government, the 'Commission.' There are thirty-six such districts, and four hundred native magistrates, on salaries of one hundred to eight hundred rupees a month, besides one hundred and twenty-five native honorary magistrates. The success of this economical administration, organised by Sir Arthur Phayre, in ensuring the safety of life and property and the fulfilment of contracts has given a new value to enterprise and thrift. The British garrison of Burma in 1900 consisted of three thousand European and seven thousand five hundred Indian regular troops.

To return to native Burma—In the centre of the capital, and by euphemism of creation, rises the *pyatthat* which canopies the principal throne in the great hall of audience, where envoys and tributary princes used to be received. Here also the princes of his own blood and the high officers of state paid court to the king on *gadaw-ne*, days when they craved pardon of the king for their shortcomings. The throne (No. 1) is ascended by a stair at the back, leading from the council-room of the king's cabinet of palace ministers, who were the medium of communication with the *Hluttaw*. On such occa-

568. ANCIENT CAPITAL SAGAING.